

JACG 7ACE

NEWSLETTER
Vol. 2 No. 2

Oct. 1982

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THE JERSEY ATARI COMPUTER GROUP

The Secretary's Report

The September meeting was its usual information-packed affair that we have all come to expect and enjoy.

However there is a bug in our program. Spelled B_G. That's right - "U" are missing in the contribution dept.

Many people in our group do their bit in presenting what they know, think or question. But there should be a more universal "INPUT" from the club. We are not a business where a question or opinion may not be appreciated. Every last one of us was born not knowing a thing about computers and there is no one in our club that knows all about them even now. Yes your questions are the ones that many other members are wondering about. The raison d'être is mutual help such as sharing our experiences with programs and hardware, recommending stores that are helpful and fair, or warning others in the club about dealers who treat us in a less than fair manner. We are in computers together. SO....SPEAK UP.....

At the September meeting we listened to the voice synthesizers, but human they are not. The Voice Box from the Alien Group worked the best in my opinion. The S.A.M. was software driven and the screen blanked during its recital - a very unsatisfactory occurrence. The prices are approximately \$130.00 for the Voice Box and \$60.00 for S.A.M.

The election of officers will take place at the November meeting. If you are interested in helping out let Dick Kushner know as soon as possible.

So as they say in Basic:

GOTO 10/9/82 (Next meeting date)

Ed Picciuti - Secretary, JACG
201 267 7745

From the Editors Desk.....

I would like to thank those people who have given me feedback on this Newsletter. I have plenty of ideas and am still experimenting with its look and content. I enjoyed putting together the Sept. issue and am eager to make this Newsletter the best it can be. Of course, that requires your help in the form of submitting programs, articles and reviews for inclusion in each issue.

This issue of the Newsletter is full of surprises. First, it is a new (improved) size -- 9x10 inches. This size makes it weigh less than one ounce for cheapo mailing (only 20 cents vs. 37 cents). We couldn't use lighter paper because it has a print-through problem and lighter ink costs too much. Secondly, you will notice on page 10 (for sure) and elsewhere throughout the paper a different type size. Instead of printing the originals in condensed mode with 3-1/2 inch column spacing, I am now experimenting with full size pica print, 5-1/2 inch columns and 64% reduction. Hopefully, this will make the Newsletter easier to read. Let me know what your preferences are.

As this issue is going to press, it looks like a good sampling of topics are being covered - hardware and software information, programming utilities, reviews and application programs. I would especially like to thank Hank Hirschfeld, for putting together the indexes to Volume 1 of the JACG Newsletter. Presenting this kind of information is one more way in which we are trying to give you more for your membership dollar.

In the last issue I forgot to mention that I will also accept submissions to the Newsletter on tape. All you have to do is type the article on the screen using your BASIC cartridge, line numbers and REM statements. Then save the "program" onto a tape and mail it to me. I will do the rest and your tape will be returned.

I would like to institute an occasional theme issue for the Newsletter. The first theme will be the use of the Atari home computer for interesting or unusual applications. If you or someone you know is using the Atari computer to make their personal or business life easier, write a few paragraphs about it and send it to me. When I get enough input to fill the Newsletter, we will have our first theme issue and share this information with everyone.

Don't forget, get those articles, etc. to me by the 20th of the month.

Arthur Leyenberger



AND NOW A WORD FROM THE PRESIDENT...

First, in the area of late breaking news...

-Atari has a \$15M contract with DOD to put Ataris in DOD run schools.

-300K Ataris have been sold to date, with production now at 35K per month.

-Atari Word Processor may come out with versions tuned to other than the Atari printer (and, I hope, with some improvements!)

-New 810 drives have no speed control pot (and don't need it), BUT won't write on disks formatted with older drives.

-Atari will soon offer service contracts on out-of-warranty computers and peripherals. (No wonder, with service fees as follows: 800-\$100, 400-\$85, 810-\$125, 825-\$150, 410-\$40, 850-\$50.)

-The majority of 810 problems are due to one transistor array, which is cheap and can be replaced by any amateur tinkerer (the 3086 chip).

-APX charges full price for revised products, EVEN if the revision only eliminates bugs in the original. (Name me one other software house that can get away with that!).

We took nominations for our second year at the September meeting. No one challenged the current slate of officers (who, under drugs and torture, agreed to serve another year) and we got one nomination for the position of Program Chairman. So, the names up for election at our November meeting will be:

President: Dick Kushner Chief Librarian: Don Ursem
V.-Pres: Dennis Kushler Adv. Manager: Herb Lehner
Secretary: Ed Picciuti Prog. Chrm.: Richard Rospond
Treasurer: Rick Olson Editor: Art Leyenberger

Remember to follow the Chicago voting rule: vote early and vote often. But, seriously folks, I want to thank all the officers for their efforts in getting us going so successfully during our first year. I also hope to see more people becoming involved during the coming year.

Which makes a nice segue to the topic of special interest groups. It is my feeling that these can provide an important outlet for those who want to go much more deeply into various aspects of the Atari. By concentrating on specific areas, these groups can boldly go where no man has gone before... Sorry about that, I sometimes get carried away with flights of fancy. Some of our sign-up lists have more than 20 names on them and the only missing ingredient is leadership. We will try to find time at our meeting to let some of the groups congregate and make plans for getting together on their own. The newsletter is, of course, available for meeting notices and reports on progress.

Our Bulletin Board is now up and running at Earthrise Computer Center. All you modem users should give it a try and report any difficulties. We hope to soon be on the air 24 hours a day. Ken Roser will serve as SYSOP, so direct your likes and dislikes, suggestions and criticisms, dos and don'ts to him by leaving a message on the BBS (201-377-4084).

Another hot piece of information - from the "Believe It Or Not" file. On-Line Systems, now Sierra On-Line is shipping FROGGER now!!! In fact, at long last, we have received our group purchase. Those who ordered this program should contact me to arrange delivery if you don't get it at the October meeting. This oft delayed product, said to be true blue re-creation of the arcade game, is finally about to face the jury of Atari users (many of whom long ago gave up waiting and purchased PREPPIE). NOTE: I have taken a brief look at FROGGER and it looks VERY much like the arcade version. We will undoubtedly have a review of it in our next issue.

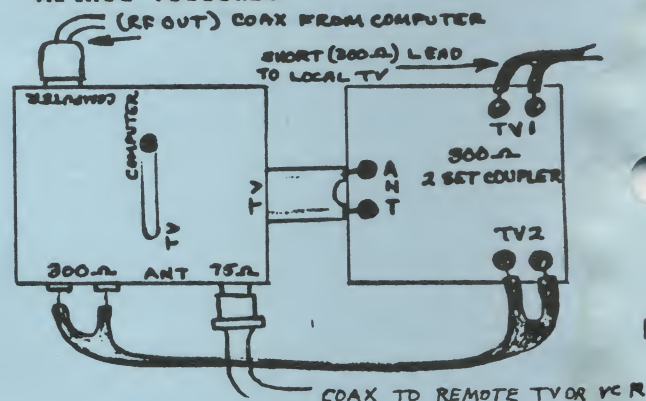
And another (can you stand it!). Atari has been bought out by Lucasfilms (who brought you Star Wars, Raiders of the Lost Ark, etc.). All the current production of computers will be used to animate the main character in their next movie, tentatively entitled "Atarizilla Meets the Colecomonster". This will be followed in three years by "Ataristein Meets the Intellivisionopus". Remember, you heard it here first.

Back to the real world now with a suggestion to the JACG membership - several groups have set up "experts" in different areas who are available "on-call" one night a week for other members who have problems. In this way, the burden on any one person is minimal and you can get a chance to help those who are less advanced. The following might be good areas to cover at the beginning: BASIC, assembly language, FORTH and hardware. Two hours on one evening each week should be adequate. If you are interested in being the guru in any of these areas (or others you might think of), let me know and we'll see if we can set up a schedule.

Dick Kushner - JACG President

WANT TO ADD ON ANOTHER TV OR VCR

Want to give a live demo using a TV for the user and another for the audience, or create a video session on tape? A cheap and satisfactory method follows.



DISK DEAL

How would you like to buy some new, blank, floppy disks for your Atari 810 Disk Drive for only \$1.68 each? You heard it right and don't worry, they're not made by the Acme Radiator and Magnetic Media Company. We have the opportunity to make a group purchase of Control Data single-sided, soft-sectored, double-density 5-1/4 inch floppy disks. The cost to you is \$20.00 per box of 12 disks, including shipping. These disks are error free, warranted for 1 year and have a reinforced hub. You may order 1 box or 20 boxes (sorry, no single disks available).

I have been volunteered to act as collector of monies and official order person. So..... get your \$20.00 per box to me by Friday, October 22, 1982. I will accept checks, money orders and, in person, cash. Delivery should take approximately 2 weeks.

Arthur Leyenberger
(address on back page)

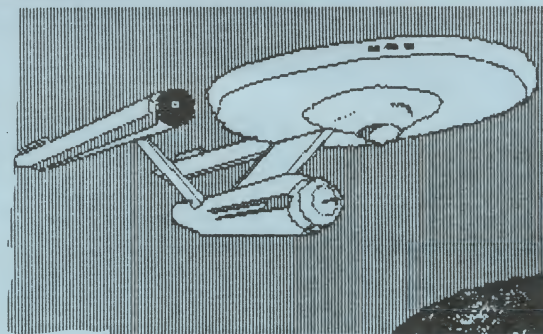
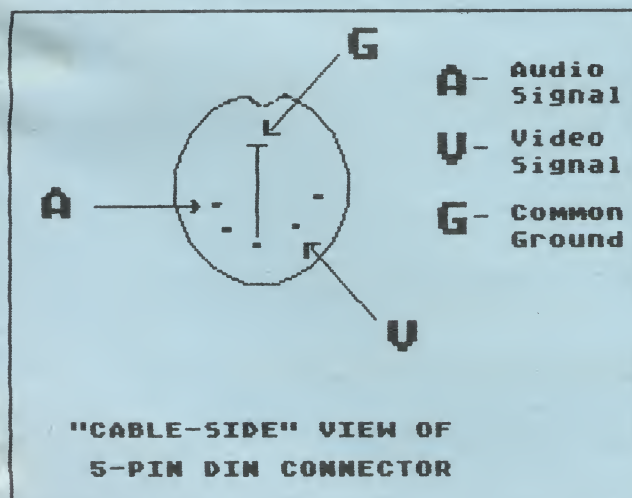
The Atari 800 may be connected directly to a video monitor via the 5-pin DIN style connector located on the right side of the 800. Atari sells Model CX89 to connect the 800 to a wide variety of monitors (different monitors use different types of connectors for the video and audio signals-my monitor uses an RCA plug for both, other monitors may use other types of plugs), for \$49.95. I tried two different manufacturer's "supposedly" standard 5-pin DIN-to-dual-RCA plug cables, and both suffered two significant drawbacks: (a) they were both very short (only six feet - ok for small monitors where you'd like to be close anyway, but I wanted to get farther away from my 25 inch monitor), and (b) neither worked (video ok, but audio very distorted). They were each about one-tenth the cost of Atari's cable, but that feature couldn't redeem drawback (b). I then went to my local Radio Shack store and purchased the following parts:

PART NUMBER	DESCRIPTION	PRICE
274-321	5-PIN DIN PLUG	1.69
278-1276	28 FT., TWO CONDUCTOR, SHIELDED MICROPHONE CABLE	2.69
274-3	PKG. OF 8 RCA CONNECTORS*	1.49

TOTAL COST 5.87

* - may need different type plugs depending on your monitor's requirements

These parts were then wired as indicated on the attached diagram. I experienced no problems connecting one of the conductors to the pin labeled "A", the other to "V" and the shield to "G". You may, however, desire to run a separate, shielded conductor for each of the signals. If you do "share the shield", you will need to be a bit creative at the monitor end of the cable, in terms of dividing the shield conductors into two groups for attachment to the audio and video plugs.

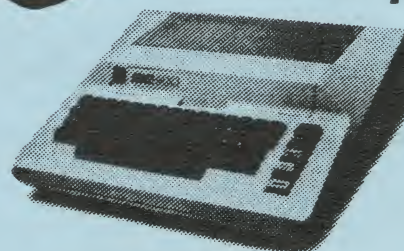


NOTE FOR FRICTION PRINTERS

It's such a waste using 8-1/2" paper for such things as dumping disk directories with DOS, printing out all the 4" labels you'd like to see but don't really want the labels, using the printer with a program that functions like a printing calculator, or for making small sized screen dumps. Solution: Get a roll of 3-7/8" paper, make a simple stand and feed. ■

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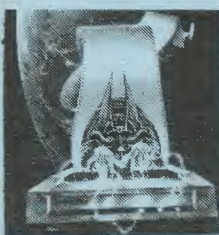
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BRODERBUND -disks only- Apple Panic Coming Soon Choplifter Star Blazer	EDU-WARE -cassettes or disks- Compu-Read Compu-Math Decimals Compu-Math Fractions	JV SOFTWARE -cassette or disk- ACTION QUEST	SANTA CRUZ EDUCATIONAL SOFTWARE -cassettes or disks- Tricky Tutorials # 1-6	INFOCOM -disks only- Zork I Zork II Deadline
ON-LINE SYSTEMS -disks only- Ulysses Mission Asteroid Wizard and the Princess	GEBELLI -disks only- Match Racer Pathfinder Andromeda	LJK ENTERPRISES -disks only- Letter Perfect	VISICORP -disks only- Visicalc	

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SPECIAL INTEREST GROUPS List of members

At the July meeting, special interest group sign-up sheets were posted in the lobby of the auditorium. This was also done at the September meeting. The following is a listing of those sheets. It is left up to each group to decide how, where and when they will meet. A member list will be published in the November Newsletter to facilitate the special interest group formation.

Key: N-North, S-South, C-Central, W-West *-willing to assume a leadership role in the group.

Dean White	N	PASCAL	Ben Eng	N
------------	---	--------	---------	---

R. Mastella	S	BASIC		
-------------	---	-------	--	--

John Callaghan	S	EDUCATION	William Jacobs	S
Curtis Springstead	N		George Chin	S
J. D. McElroy	C		J. Sneedse	W
Stan Post	N			

John Callaghan	S	GAME CONSTRUCTION	Steve Muccione	N
Neal Rothleder	N		C.W. Fong	N
John Palinkas	N		George Chin	S
Greg Panza	S		Edgar Willinelson	N
Garry Hodgson	C		Joe Rudia	N
Joe Petrillo	N		Mark Corkin	C
Vinnie Murphy	N			

Curtis Springstead	N	PILOT	Nelson Pineda	C *
J. D. McElroy	C		J. Sneedse	W
Rich Lamb	C			

John Callaghan	S	GRAPHICS	Neal Rothleder	N
Ken Roser	N		C.W. Fong	N
Don White	N		Dick Shields	N *
Garry Hodgson	C		George Chin	S
Greg Panza	S		Vince Murphy	N

TELECOMMUNICATIONS

Ken Roser	N	Don White	N
Dick Shields	N *	Nelson Pineda	C *
Berne Stober	N	Hank Hirschfeld	N
Bob Reeves	C	Jay Sklower	C
Dick Kushner	C		

ARCADE GAMES

Steve Muccione	N	Ken Roser	N
John Palinkas	N	Garry Hodgson	C
George Chin	S	Hank Hirschfeld	N
Greg Panza	S	Neal Rothleder	N
Joe Rudia	N	Joe Petrillo	N
Bob Wilkinson	N	Vince Murphy	N
Mark Corkin	C		

FORTH

Dennis Hoskins	N	Curtis Springstead	N *
Dan Martin	N	Steve Rothleder	N
C.W. Fong	N	Doug Way	N
Garry Hodgson	N	Rob Phillips	N
George Chin	S	Hank Hirschfeld	N
Don Ursem	N	Neal Rothleder	N
Jay Schonberger	N	Joe Rudia	N
Rich Lamb	C	Gary Schmidt	C
Dean White	C	Larry White	C
Jim Stanaro	C	Dick Kushner	C

ASSEMBLY LANGUAGE

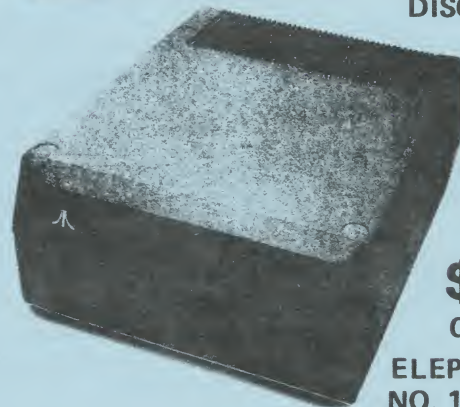
George Chin	S	H. Wolverton	N
A. Tom	N	John Callaghan	S
Steve Muccione	N	Greg Panza	S
Neal Rothleder	N	Ken Roser	N
Paul Moody	N	C.W. Fong	N
Edgar Coscolluela	N	John Palinkas	N
Bill Page	N	Dennis Kushler	N
Frank Hopwood	N	Larry White	N
Don Ursem	N	Dick Shields	N *
Berne Stober	N	George Hamilton	N
Tom Kretkowski	N	Vince Murphy	N
Jay Sklower	C	Stan Post	N
Dick Kushner	C	Neal Feivelson	C

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DODGERACER	J. COLLINS	1/4/4
GALAXY DEFENDER	A. RUSSO	1/2/4
HAYES SMARTMODEM	H. HIRSCHFELD	1/7/10
JAWBREAKER	J. COLLINS	1/4/4
NUK SUB	A. RUSSO	1/2/4
POOL 1.5	D. KUSHNER	1/2/4
POOL, SNOOKER & BILLIARDS	D. KUSHNER	1/2/4
PROTECTOR (CRYSTALWARE)	J. COLLINS	1/4/4
REAR GUARD	D. KUSHNER	1/7/11
SHADOWWALK ONE	A. RUSSO	1/4/12
SHOOTING GALLERY	J. COLLINS	1/4/4
TEXTWIZARD	D. KUSHNER	1/1/3
WIZARD AND THE PRINCESS	B. OAKES	1/4/11

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Wouldn't it be nice if BASIC programs, such as "D:MENU" could be run on power-up without having to type them in? Recently, A.N.A.L.O.G. magazine issue #6 promised just such a capability in one of its articles ("Run BASIC Automatically, Indy ATARI Club, Indianapolis, Indiana, p.33). Unfortunately, only half of the assembly language program was printed! I called the mag and Tom Hudson of the technical division said they were well aware of the omission and, to make matters worse, they didn't know how to contact the author of the article. All was not lost, however, since Tom had a similar program (written by Chris Crawford) and would send it to me, with permission to reprint it in our newsletter. I received the listing promptly, entered it as listed below, and it ran with nary a bug.

After typing in the program and RUNNING it, answer the prompt with RUN "D:(program)". The program will create an AUTORUN.SYS file which will then run your BASIC program when your disk drive is booted up.

```
10 DIM A$(128)
20 ? "DOS VERSION 2.X"
40 ? :? "ENTER COMMAND "":INPUT A$
50 OPEN #1,0,0,"D:AUTORUN.SYS"
60 PUT #1,255
70 PUT #1,255
80 PUT #1,0
90 PUT #1,6
100 L=123+LEN(A$)-1
110 PUT #1,L
120 PUT #1,6
130 FOR I=1 TO 123
140 READ D
150 IF I=64 THEN PUT #1,LEN(A$)-1:GOTO 170
160 PUT #1,D
170 NEXT I
180 FOR I=LEN(A$) TO 1 STEP -1
190 PUT #1,ASC(A$(I,I))
200 NEXT I
210 PUT #1,255
220 PUT #1,255
230 PUT #1,226
240 PUT #1,2
250 PUT #1,227
260 PUT #1,2
270 PUT #1,0
280 PUT #1,6
290 CLOSE #1
300 END
1000 DATA 162,0,189,26,3,201,69,240,5,232
1010 DATA 232,232,208,244,232,142,105,6,189,26
1020 DATA 3,133,205,169,107,157,26,3,232,189
```

```
1030 DATA 26,3,133,206,169,6,157,26,3,160
1040 DATA 0,162,16,177,205,153,107,6,200,202
1050 DATA 208,247,169,67,141,111,6,169,6,141
1060 DATA 112,6,169,10,141,106,6,96,172,106
1070 DATA 6,240,9,185,123,6,206,106,6,160
1080 DATA 1,96,138,72,174,105,6,165,205,157
1090 DATA 26,3,232,165,206,157,26,3,104,170
1100 DATA 169,155,160,1,96,0,0,0,0,0
1110 DATA 0,0,0,0,0,0,0,0,0,76
1120 DATA 0,0,0
```

REVIEW

COLECOVISION CONTROLLER
by Arthur Leyenberger - JACG

With the introduction of the new Colecovision TV videogame, it occured to me to test the hand controller on an Atari 800 computer. Well, I have some good news and some bad news for anyone wishing to do the same. First the good news: the Coleco controller (joystick, paddle and keyboard all rolled into one) is "plug compatible" with the Atari joystick ports. Now the bad news: unfortunately, the plug seems to be the only thing that is compatible.

I'll admit that I was excited when I first plugged it in. I don't play games on my Atari that often, but when I do, it's a real hassle to have to fool around with joysticks, paddles and whatnot. One controller, with all of the options, would suit me just fine. The first game I tried was Pacman. It didn't work too bad, although it seemed that the joysticks short stalk would take a while to get used to. I then tried Star Raiders and knew this joystick would take a while to get used to. Is a rating of "Galatic Flea Killer" lower than "Garbage Skow Captain"?

I continued to "play-test" other games including Asteroids, K-Razy Shootout, Missile Command, Space Invaders, etc., when I suddenly realized I had not yet tried any paddle-games. After attempting to play Super Breakout and Chicken (Synapse), I learned that it was not possible to play paddle-games with the Coleco controller.

To summarize, the paddle did not work on the Atari, the keyboard had no effect and only the left fire-button was compatible. The only games that I would even consider using this controller for are the maze-type games where the fire-button need not be pressed during the game. This is because the width of the controller requires that the thumb be used to hold it, and therefore the thumb cannot manipulate the fire-button at the same time. In fact, I almost dropped the controller several times before I was blown out of the skies in Star Raiders. Atari should be coming out soon with their new 5200 game and that controller you see in the ads looks really neat. In the meantime, anybody got some flea powder?

I would like to thank Gemini Electronics for lending me the Coleco controller for evaluation.



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810 DISK DRIVE SPEED WOES		1/6/3
ACCESSING EPSON GRAPHICS SYMBOLS	J. CALLAGHAN	1/6/10
ADDING A GTIA CHIP TO YOUR ATARI800	K.ROSER	1/4/7
CASSETTE HINTS		1/1/2
CORRECTIONS TO GTIA DEMO IN CRE.COM	H.C. JOHNSON	1/6/3
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VISIT TO ATARILAND	D. KUSHNER	1/7/2

NOTE FOR TEXT WIZARD

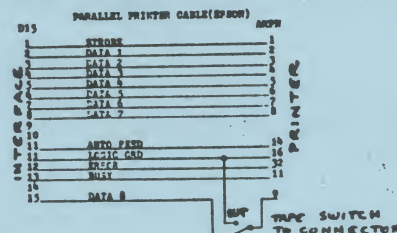
When right-justifying text that you don't want to print all the way to the right put normal spaces after the text to space in from the right, then put one inverse-video space (▣) and return. e.g.

Very truly yours, 

Correspondent 

NOTE FOR EPSON PRINTER USERS

Tired of getting those EPSON graphics when listing your programs containing inverse video. Using the schematic below, a small SPDT toggle switch, and some patience, can get the text out. Just switch bit 0 out and LIST "P".



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LISTER ASSISTER

By Bob Reeves

I wrote this program because I did not have a printer, and needed a more efficient way to list programs to the screen than the conventional "Control 1" to stop and start text scroll (attention newcomers: when listing a long program, hitting "CTRL" and "1" simultaneously stops the screen from scrolling - hit again to continue).

I type in a lot of programs from magazines (Analog, Antic, Compute, etc.) and have yet to type one in and have it run the first time. I am a Stan Ockers fan (author of Chicken) and have particular difficulty with his programs because they are loaded with machine language routines poked in from Basic via data statements (very easy to make typing errors). If you have ever tried to proof a listing when the screen contains several hundred 1 to 3 digit numbers separated by commas, you know what I mean (try Maniac from the last Analog).

This program lists one line at a time in the center of the screen and progresses through your listing by pressing any key. It has provisions for editing at any time by pressing the START button, then goes on to the next line. I wrote this to be self-explanatory, with all instructions contained in the program itself.

I used several interesting routines. The first one, from Computes First Book of Atari, is in lines 30012 through 30014, and determines the line numbers of any Basic program, then places them in an array L(X). I specifically excluded the line numbers of the lister program, and erase them at the end, leaving only the program of interest.

This brings me to the second interesting routine, borrowed from De Re Atari, which erases lines from a program while it is running! This routine is in lines 30025 through 30030 and works by poking location 842 with a 12 or 13. This memory location normally contains a 12, which is WRITE to screen, but if a 13 is poked in, the editor will read what is printed on the screen. You must use care in where you position the cursor when you stop to read the screen (you can't read on-the-run), and in how many lines you try to read. If you write too many lines (more than a screenful) you won't be able to read them all, and your Atari may "go to sleep" trying to read what isn't there. You must tell your Atari what do next in the last line it reads from the screen. If you want to see this routine in action, just eliminate "POKE 559,0" in line 30023. I turned the screen off during this period, and this will turn it back on.

Lines 1,2,&3 represent a "sample listing" to show how the utility works. Hit select when prompted, then list what's left. Delete lines 1,2,&3 before listing your final version of this back to disk or tape.

A few remarks to help in typing this in:

"3" = "ESC CLEAR"

" in line 30015 = "ESC SHIFT/CLEAR once followed by

"ESC CTRL/EQUAL six times"

" in line 30016 = "ESC CTRL/MINUS three times"

I use this utility all the time. I hope it helps someone!

0 GOTO 30000

1 REM THESE LINES ARE HERE TO DEMON- STRATE HOW THIS UTILITY WORKS. AT END OF PROGRAM LISTING, HIT .

2 REM THEN TYPE TO SEE WHAT'S LEFT. SURPRISE!!! NEXT, THIS UTILITY BACK INTO MEMORY.

3 REM THEN, LINES 1,2,& 3 ONLY, AND THIS BACK TO TAPE OR DISK BE-FORE USING IT ON YOUR OWN PROGRAMS.

30000 DIM L(1000):A=PEEK(136)+256*PEEK(137):POKE 752,1

30001 ? "3":SETCOLOR 2,2,6:SETCOLOR 1,0,0:?" "

30002 ? " by Bob Reeves JAG6"

30003 ? :? :? "This utility will allow you to list":? "one line at a time on the screen, and"

30004 ? "should help in debugging programs with many data statements, which are diffi-cult to read by the ";

30005 ? "'screenful'. To use it, it into your basic program from disk or tape, ";

30006 ? "then type . To advance lines, touch a key."

30007 ? :? "To fix a typo, hit the button and follow the instructions.":? :? "This utility uses line 0";

30008 ? " and lines 30000-30030, so make sure there's nothing there!":? :? "PRESS ANY KEY TO CONTINUE"

30009 IF PEEK(764)=255 THEN 30009

30010 POKE 764,255

30011 ? "3"

30012 FOR X=1 TO 1000

30013 L(X)=PEEK(A)+PEEK(A+1)*256:IF L(X)=30000 THEN CLR :? "3":POKE 752,1:GOTO 30019

30014 IF L(X)=0 THEN A=A+PEEK(A+2):NEXT X

30015 ? "3":LIST L(X):?" "

30016 IF PEEK(53279)=6 THEN ? "3";"CONT":POKE 752,0:?" :? "3":STOP

30017 POKE 752,1:IF PEEK(764)<>255 THEN POKE 764,255:A=A+PEEK(A+2):NEXT X

30018 GOTO 30016

30019 ? "3":?" " :? :? "IF YOU ARE ARE READY TO TRY YOUR PROGRAM (OR THIS ";

30020 ? "EXAMPLE), HIT .":? :? "YOU WILL ERASE THIS UTILITY, LEAVING ONLY YOUR PROGRAM."

30021 ? :? "TO CHECK YOUR LISTING AGAIN, JUST HIT ";

30022 ? "AND THEN THIS UTILITY AGAIN."

30023 IF PEEK(53279)=5 THEN ? "3":ZZ=PEEK(559):POKE 559,0:GOTO 30025

30024 GOTO 30023

30025 POSITION 2,4:POKE 842,13

30026 ? 0:FOR X=30000 TO 30015:?" X:NEXT X:?"CONT"

30027 POSITION 2,0:STOP

30028 ? "3":POSITION 2,4

30029 FOR X=30016 TO 30030:?" X:NEXT X:?"POKE

559,ZZ:CLR:POKE 752,0:POKE 842,12:GR.0:POKE 764,255:END"

30030 POSITION 2,0:STOP

REVIEW - STARBASE HYPERION
by CW Fong - JACG

Starbase Hyperion is a strategic simulation war game published by Quality Software and written by JACG Librarian, Don Ursem.

As the commander of the Starbase Hyperion, an outpost of the Colonial Confederation, your mission is to defend it against the invading evil Empire force until reinforcement from Colonial Star Command can come to the rescue. The game begins with your choosing a computer generated scenario suitable to your own skill level. With a starting amount of energy resources, you are to allocate them wisely in creating battleships, building up the defensive shield, creating sensors, powering the energy generator, and maintaining power reserve. The game proceeds in turns with each cycle representing one day. During each turn, additional energy is generated by the power generator and can be allocated. During each turn, you can also deploy your battleships into space to engage the enemy force in battle. The actions are tracked by a graphic scanner displaying positions of enemy and friendly battleships in a polar coordinate map. Combat occurs whenever enemy ships are positioned within combat range of friendly ships. Ships are damaged or destroyed during such confrontations. If your ships do not stop all the enemy vessels, they will converge on the starbase, maybe penetrating the defense shield and maybe destroying the starbase, whereby the game will end. The game can also end with your staying alive till the 15th turn, which represents the 15 days required by Colonial Reinforcement to arrive. Lasting the 15 days is fairly difficult until you have spent many hours playing the game and studying the battle manual.

This is definitely not a video arcade type game (though there are some real time reflex response requirements), but rather a simulation game that requires a lot of your own imagination. The vivid sound effects help tremendously in setting up the mood of the actions. You will find your muscles tensing when you hear the swooping sounds made by the enemy battleships closing in on your starbase for the kill.

My major complaint about this game is its graphic representation of spaceships. Both friendly and enemy ships are represented by the same symbol of different colors. The two colors do not contrast sharply enough to eliminate confusion. I made many wrong moves because I mistook friendly ships for enemy ships.

Overall, I found that playing this game requires concentration, and strategic planning, but each time I played it, I enjoyed it more.

TITLE	AUTHOR	VO/IS/PG
26 LINE DISPLAY	J. DAHLBERG	1/5/6
A GRAPHICAL HOLIDAY GREETING	MACE	1/2/6
A USEFUL WORD PROCESSOR	F. HOPWOOD	1/6/5
ANIMATE	E. ALFARO	1/5/4
ATARI TELEPHONE TONE DIALING	C. HOSICK	1/2/5
CHICKEN	S. OCKER	1/3/4
CHICKEN DRESSING*CORRECTION*	H. HIRSCHFELD	1/7/4
CHICKEN DRESSING	H. HIRSCHFELD	1/6/11
COLOR ALIGNMENT PROGRAM LISTING #2	K. ROSER	1/4/9
COLOR TV CHECK	TULSA ATARI GRP	1/1/2
DISK VERSION OF SPACE INVADERS	B. ENG	1/2/3,7
DOS MENU	SAN DIEGO ACE	1/1/2
EXPLORING CTIA MODES 9,10,11	H. JOHNSON	1/7/6
GRAPHICS 11? DEMO	DALLAS TX	1/1/3
GRAPHICS CORNER	B. KLAUSHE	1/7/4
GTIA CHECK LISTING #1	K. ROSER	1/4/9
HOR. TABING FOR THE EPSON MX-80	B. NADLER	1/7/11
MEMORY TEST PROGRAM	P. WAINSHUIS	1/5/3
MICROTEXT WORD PROCESSOR	SOFTSIDE MAGAZINE	1/3/2
MICROTEXT UPDATE	SOFTSIDE MAGAZINE	1/5/7
MIXED GTIA AND CTIA GRAPHICS	W.W. HOUGH	1/7/9
MOVE TEXT WINDOW TO TOP OF SCREEN	J. CARMODY	1/5/6
PAGE FLIPPING	WATERLOO USER GROUP	1/7/3
PHONE DIALER PROGRAM	D. KUSHNER	1/2/5
PROGRAM SCRAMBLER	E. MARTELL	1/2/7
PROGRAMMING NOTE	HACE	1/2/5
RESTART BASIC USING SYSTEM RESET	R. JAEGER	1/6/11
SECTOR COPIER	D. KUSHLER	1/4/10
SECTOR COPIER*CORRECTION*	D. KUSHLER	1/5/4
SPLIT SCREEN IN GRAPHICS 8		1/2/5

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FILEMANAGER 800 (reviewed by Tony Messina in A.N.A.L.O.G. #5), the disk-based file management system for the Atari computer, has just evolved into a serious database program under the name of FILEMANAGER+. Yes, I said serious. I have used the previous version for about 3 months and it was useful to me only as a list keeper. Aside from satisfying my 32K-a-day habit (I am an information junkie), it did little else. Well, my attitude has changed and I would like to share with you my evaluation of the current program.

FILEMANAGER+ allows the user to not only create an initial set of fields (called a form) easily but also to review this form at any time and make modifications to it. Let me give an example.

I don't like to spend hours and hours completing my income tax forms. One way I have devised to reduce the amount of time needed to fill out the schedule of itemized deductions is to create a database of deductible expenses. FM+ allows me to create a customized form that includes the items of interest (fields) for this application. The fields I have created include: CATEGORY (what type of expense is it - business, education, medical, etc.), WHO (was it for me or my wife), DATE, CHECK#, AMTPAID (how much did the insurance company or the company I work for reimburse me for the expense), DESCRIP, AMOUNT (how much was the expense) and CLAIMAMT.

The names of these fields were chosen to be the most descriptive of what they are, however, you may call them anything you like. Also, there are 3 types of fields: 1) alphabetic fields like WHO or DESCRIP are simply made up of letters; 2) numeric fields like CHECK#, are made up of numbers; and 3) AMOUNT and AMTPAID are Dollar and Cents fields. The latter are stored as special numbers with 2 decimal places and, when printed, are right justified. CLAIMAMT is called a calculated field because it was never entered as a number but rather is a calculation of AMOUNT - AMTPAID. FM+ allows constants to be used as well.

Unlike FM 800 which allowed only one sort field, FM+ allows 3 levels of sorting for my file. I have the DATE sorted within WHO, and WHO sorted within CATEGORY. This means that the records are all grouped into categories and within each category, the records are grouped into my or my wife's expenses, and within say, my expenses, the records are sorted by the date of the expense. These three fields - CATEGORY, WHO, DATE - are called the index fields and they determine how the data is actually stored on the disk. Once I have indexed my file, I don't need to go to it again until I decide to change the order in which the records are stored. Having the data already sorted in the order that I want makes retrieval very fast.

Let me mention some of the other features of FILEMANAGER+ using the example I have described. A very powerful feature is to search the database for any particular field or fields. If I wanted to quickly determine the total of my medical expenses I would choose the search option which would present my form on the screen. Then I would fill in the blanks with "LAL" (my initials) for the WHO field and "medical" for the CATEGORY field. The program would then search through the file and select only those records that matched my two search criteria. I could also have searched for all "LAL's", all except "LAL's", all up to "LAL's" or all after "LAL's". Output can be directed to a printer or the screen and be continuous or one record at a time. When data is viewed on the screen, individual records may be updated or deleted.

There are many other useful features. Mailing labels may be produced either from the entire file or by using the same features allowed in the search option. Your index fields may be reviewed which allows you to quickly scan the entire file to verify

your records. Subfiles may be created and saved for future use either by FM+ or TEXTWIZARD (By DATASOFT). Also, FM+ is compatible with the Axlon RAMDISK. One especially useful feature is to take an existing database and modify it without retyping the data. You can create new fields, shorten, lengthen or delete old fields and create new calculated fields. In addition, files may be copied, deleted, renamed or combined into larger files.

The entire program is menu-based. The categories are MAIN, CREATE FORM, INITIALIZE and RECORD menus. Several of the menus are hierarchical. For example, in order to copy a file, one would select the "create/util" option of the MAIN menu and then select the "copy file" option from the UTILITIES menu. I was told by a person at Synapse that the program is about as big as it can get and still fit into the Atari. This is one of the reasons for the multiple menu approach. I don't particularly like menu-based systems since they are time consuming and the frequent user usually finds that they get in the way. However, the menus themselves, are straight forward enough to ensure that the casual user will not become confused or frustrated.

FM+ has two additional differences from FM 800. The documentation accompanying this program is 500% better than it was before. Having spent days trying to decipher the text-based instructions of the earlier version, it is good to see Synapse joining the rest of the world by including screen facsimiles in the manual. Although there are a few typos here and there, it is much easier to follow the instructions when pictures of the screens are shown in the text.

The other difference between the old and new versions is the method of copy protection. The older version used a "DATA LOCK" key that had to be inserted into the first joystick port for FILEMANAGER 800 to work. A back up copy of the program was provided on a separate disk but the key was required for operation. Now, a key is not needed, and a back up copy of the program is provided on the back side of the program disk. I prefer a separate back up copy and I called Synapse to inquire about purchasing one. I was told none were available and when I asked what I should do after one of my three cats ate the program disk I was told either send the "leftovers" to Synapse for a replacement disk (at \$30.00) or keep the disk away from my cats.

I do have some criticisms of FILEMANAGER+. 1) Although error messages are described in the manual, it is difficult to find them since they are contained under each section. It would be useful to have an appendix with a list of ALL of the error messages with brief descriptions and references to appropriate sections of the manual. 2) The directory option which lists the names of the files on a disk does not show how large each of the files are. When an old and an updated file are both on the same disk, the file size would help determine which is which. Also, when creating a subfile or modifying a form, it would be useful to know if there was enough room on the disk to accommodate it. 3) The ability to define calculated fields is one of the features that makes this a serious database program. However, totals are printed (or displayed) only at the end of the entire list of records. Subtotals should be available both at page breaks and at sort breaks (in the above example, there should be a subtotal for my business expenses, my wife's business expenses, and all business expenses, in addition to the total for all expenses.) 4) Pagination control is needed to avoid printing on the tear line of fan-fold paper. This would be especially useful if the page length could be user-defined. Page numbering would also be nice. 5) When converting an old file into a new file with a modified form, it would be useful to be told how many records were converted. Calculated field values should be created during the conversion process. The way it exists now, after the file is converted the new file must be loaded, and each record must be individually updated to get the calculated field to have a value other than a blank. I learned this the hard way when after a conversion, I tried to load and

print some fields, resulting in an incomprehensible error message and no hard copy. This same problem appeared regardless of what I tried. I later learned that this error message meant that there was an alpha character in a field that the program expected to be numeric. With this tidbit of wisdom in hand, I experimented and found that by first updating each individual record I was finally able to print what I wanted. I actually lied to my computer since I really didn't have to update anything - for each record, I first told the program that I wanted to update the record, and then I told it to save that "updated" record. 6) My last complaint is that there is no provision for batch updating of records. It is a real pain to have to go through each record and update it individually. I would like to see a transaction file capability where a file can be created with the additions, modifications and deletions that are desired. Each entry in this file would uniquely identify the record to be changed, the type of change and the actual data. Then, this transaction file would be mashed against the database, creating a new updated file containing all of the changes. The original file would still be intact to serve as a back up in case the user messed up.

An additional feature I would like to see is user-definable totalling types for the calculated fields where the user could specify how the total should be calculated. Options would include a COUNT of the items being totaled, an AVERAGE consisting of the sum divided by the total count, a MEAN which would be similar to AVERAGE without including zero-value fields, a HIGHEST value, a LOWEST value, a MEDIAN and a PERCENTAGE of each field value to the sum.

To summarize, I would eagerly recommend FILEMANAGER+ because the program is easy to use, the documentation is good and, most important of all, Synapse Software stands behind their product. For those of you who already own FILEMANAGER 800, the new version may be obtained for \$25.00, your DATALOCK key and your existing disks. All registered owners should have been notified by now. The new version lists for \$99.00 and is well worth it.

If you have any questions, I am sure Synapse would be happy to answer them. They are located at: 5327 Jacuzzi St. - Suite 1, Richmond, CA 94804. (415) 527 - 7751.

=====

TRADING POST

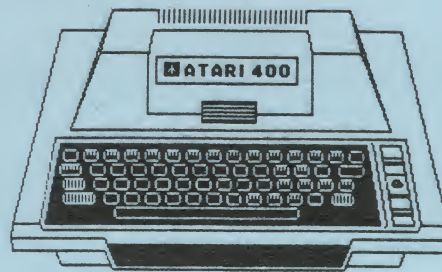
=====

Trading Post is a monthly column that allows JACG members to list items for sale or swap. There is no charge for this service, and material must reach me by the 20th of the month.

For Sale: Game Cartridges for 400/800-- Asteroids - \$18.00, Star Raiders - \$18.00. Also, issues #1-6 of Analog magazine - \$12.00. Contact: Art Leyenberger, 386-4254, weekdays.

For Sale: Hassle-free way to store 12 cassette tapes. Factory new cassette albums. I bought one case of 24, and have some left at \$2.50 each. Call: Frank Pazel, (201) 627-8845 (after 5:00 p.m.).

For Sale: Atari 800 computer, with 8k, BASIC cartridge, 410 program recorder and 820 40-column printer. \$650.00. Also, FDI IQ Builder series Cassettes -- Analogies, Number series, Vocabulary 1 & 2 and Astro Quotes. All for \$35.00. Contact: Walt Pavlik, 922-0598.



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Programs: WE NEED HELP HERE

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